

Co-operatives AUSTRALIA

Minute of conference call meeting, 10.00 a.m. – 11:04 a.m. EST
Friday 09 August 2013

PRESENT: Co-operative Federation of New South Wales (Richard O'Leary), Co-operative Federation of Queensland (Jim Howard), Co-operative Federation of South Australia (John Keep and Trevor Schmidt), Co-operatives Victoria (David Griffiths and Tony O'Shea) and Co-operatives WA (Peter Wells and Chris Enright)

In opening the meeting, Chairperson Tony O'Shea said that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the formation of the Business Council of Co-operatives and Mutuals, the impact on the State Federations and the future of Co-operatives Australia.

Full membership of the BCCM is available on a 2 tiered annual subscription basis - \$25,000 for a business with operating surpluses/profits of greater than \$1 million and \$10,000 if less than \$1 million. Non-voting membership for associates is available at a cost of \$1,000 per annum.

During the discussion it was noted:

1. Co-operatives WA had agreed to join BCCM as a full member.
2. CFNSW intended to join BCCM as a full member.
3. Co-operatives Victoria could not afford full membership but would consider associate membership.
4. CFSA would be discussing the matter at its next board meeting but could not afford full membership.
5. CFQ could not afford full membership.

The Chairperson said that Co-operatives Victoria had considered that CA membership of BCCM could have been achieved by each Federation contributing to a \$10,000 annual membership fee but he realised that this was not now possible with two federations becoming full members.

It was noted that the issue of Co-operatives Victoria, CFSA and CFQ membership of the BCCM was up to these federations and should no longer be discussed at this meeting.

Both Co-operatives WA and CFNSW suggested that Federations that could only afford associate membership of BCCM would not be disadvantaged.

CFQ queried the value of BCCM as to the benefits it would bring to all co-operatives throughout Australia and the role of mutuals in BCCM.

There was agreement by the State Federations from NSW, SA, Victoria and WA that the

formation of the BCCM was a step forward, that Federations should support its development and that the achievements of Co-operatives Australia had been limited and that this would not change and, therefore, there was no future for CA as an organisation.

CFNSW expressed its appreciation for the work of the Chairperson and Secretary for Co-operatives Australia and emphasised that no disrespect was intended.

It was suggested by Co-operatives Victoria that the two-tier membership of BCCM created a membership fee disproportionately high for small co-operatives. It was reported by CFNSW that BCCM intended to review its fee structure in at least 12 months time.

The CFNSW said that the State Federations had an opportunity to be involved before the establishment of the BCCM by contributing funds.

The CFQ argued that it was understood that the involvement of the Federations was not welcomed.

The CFNSW said that this was a ridiculous suggestion.

The following resolution was adopted with the support all Federations except CFQ which abstained saying CFQ abstained from the abolition of Co-operatives Australia but supported the development of BCCM with what CFQ were informed of its direction during the meeting as distinct from the only information previously available.

That Co-operatives Australia be dissolved at the conclusion of the meeting in favour of State Federations working through the Business Council of Co-operatives and Mutuals at the national level and that Co-operatives Victoria be asked to assume ownership of and consider the future of the Co-operatives Australia website and determine what relevant information from the website can be provided to the BCCM.

ACTION: Co-operatives Victoria

It was also agreed that it was desirable for a joint BCCM and State Co-operative Federations statement explaining why State Federations were supporting the establishment of BCCM.

ACTION: Co-operatives Victoria

Co-operatives Victoria will draft an initial statement and circulate this to all Federations for feedback.

ACTION: Co-operatives Victoria

An agreed statement would be provided to BCCM with the proposal that there be a joint BCCM and State Co-operative Federations statement of support for BCCM.

ACTION: Co-operatives Victoria

Draft Minute prepared by Secretary – 09 August 2013

Authorised by Chairman – 10 August 2013

Final Minute circulated – 17 August 2013